

The Church: Greatness, Blessings, Responsibility

Ephesians 1-5

1 Cor. 12:13-14 For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. ¹⁴ For the body does not consist of one member but of many.

I. The Importance of the Church in God's Eyes

A. The Church as the Fullness of God

Eph. 1:15-17 For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you **the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him**.

Eph. 1:18-20 ...having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, **that you may know what is the hope** to which he has called you, what are the riches of **his glorious inheritance** in the saints, and what is the **immeasurable greatness of his power** toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places.

Luke 23:46 Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, **'Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!'** And having said this he breathed his last.

Eph. 1:21-23 ...far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

B. God's Dwelling Place

Eph. 2:19-22 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him **you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit**.

Mat. 16:18 **I will build my church**, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

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1 Pet. 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

C. God's Glory

Eph. 3:8-10 To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, **so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.**

Eph. 3:20-21 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, **to him be glory in the church** and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

The Church is:

- The fullness of him who fills all in all—the highest expression of God's personality.
- The dwelling place of God—the expression of His presence among people.
- The supreme display of divine glory in the spiritual world.

II. The Place of Christ's Church in Your Life

The real value of Christ's Church in your life is measured by what you sacrifice for it.

A. The Instrument of Spiritual Equipping

Eph. 4:11-12 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, **to equip the saints for the work of ministry**, for building up the body of Christ.

*καταρτίζω - to make someone completely adequate or sufficient for something - 'to make adequate, to furnish completely, to cause to be fully qualified, adequacy.'*¹

Through Biblical teaching, pastors nourish, admonish, correct, warn, protect, guide, shape, and train the Church, the people redeemed by Christ.

¹ Low-Naida Lexicon, BibleWorks 10

Heb. 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

1 Pet. 5:5 Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.'

B. The Place of Growth in Maturity

Eph. 4:13-14 ...until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

- Come to Church to know Christ!
- Come to Church to be conformed to Christ!
- Come to Church to grow in Christ!

We preach Jesus Christ because only union with Him, knowing Him, and submitting ourselves to Him brings salvation and the fullness of life in Him.

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C. The Ministry of Building Up the Church

Eph. 4:11-12 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.

Eph. 4:15-16 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

διακονέω – to function as an intermediary, agent; to serve someone; to render assistance; to help; to carry out official duties; to take care of someone or something.²

² Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000). In [A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature](#) (3rd ed., p. 229). University of Chicago Press.